

High Performance Computing Special Interest Group

Terms of Reference

Version Control

Version	Date	Comments
1.0	27/02/2020	Updated by Graeme Murphy
1.2	23/03/2023	Inclusion of EDIA role (Section 2.1) and Non-executive roles (Section 5). Changes by Steven Chapman

High Performance Computing Special Interest Group

1 Terms of Reference

The High Performance Computing Special Interest Group (HPC-SIG) will provide a professional forum for HPC service provision in the UK Higher Education sector.

1.1 Responsible for (decisions/actions by the group):

- Utilising the HPC SIG website, group meetings and outreach activities to:
 - Demonstrate the value that HPCs in higher educational establishments bring to research and industrial collaborators in the UK.
 - Disseminate knowledge, experience and advice on good practice for HPC technologies and service operations to members and external stakeholders.
 - Develop the professional reputation of the HPC-SIG such that the group becomes the de facto focal point for stakeholders such as UKRI, BEIS and other stakeholders requiring access to advice, expertise and guidance on the use and exploitation of advanced computational and data services or platforms.
- Creating a vibrant, diverse, inclusive and welcoming community for all members built on mutual respect, equal opportunity and shared purpose.
- Addressing the HPC skills gap within UK Higher Education by:
 - Providing and promoting skills development activities and training opportunities
 - Developing recognised professional career paths for HPC in UK HEIs.
- Providing a forum where:
 - Emerging technologies and modes of service provision can be evaluated and their benefits to the community assessed and disseminated.
 - The impact of changes in regulatory requirements can be evaluated, assessed and advice on compliance disseminated.

2 The HPC SIG Executive Group

2.1 The HPC SIG Executive Group will consist of a:

Chair with responsibility for:

- Being the official representative of the HPC-SIG.
- Presiding over all general meetings of the HPC-SIG Meetings.
- Highlighting HPC and associated items of interest at SIG Meetings.
- Escalation of issues identified and agreed by the SIG members.
- Facilitating activities that will benefit and promote HPC for SIG members.
- Ensuring an environment exists that fosters new and emerging centres and where under-presented communities have a forum to voice new ideas.

Vice-Chair with responsibility for:

- Presiding over all general meetings of the HPC-SIG Meetings in the Chair's absence.
- Organising general meetings of the HPC-SIG.
- Supporting the promotion of HPC activities across the SIG.
- Liaising with SIG sites to ensure full geographic representation of events.

Secretary with responsibility for:

- Publicising SIG meetings and events.
- Managing membership details.
- Administering the HPC-SIG Executive election process.
- Ensuring minutes and notes of HPC-SIG meetings and events are recorded and reported back to the membership.

- Ensuring that the HPC-SIG Privacy Notice is issued to all new members and is available for viewing on the website.

Treasurer with responsibility for:

- Maintaining financial records and managing SIG finances.
- Distributing funds that have been properly authorised or incurred by the HPC-SIG.
- Ensuring that annual subscriptions are collected in a timely manner.

Communications Officer with responsibility for:

- Investigating technologies to improve communications with SIG members.
- Ensuring the website reflects the activities and outcomes of SIG meetings.
- Liaising with relevant complementary forums to help foster cross-cutting themes.
- Coordinating the generation of promotional material to showcase the activities of SIG sites and associated impact of centralised facilities.

Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility (EDIA) Officer, with the responsibilities for:

- Act as a point contact for HPC SIG on Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility matters and concerns.
- Maintaining the code of conduct for the HPC SIG's meetings and communications.
- Maintain an understanding of the demographic of the membership and report these to the committee.
- To inform the SIG's approach to Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility by discussing, exploring and making recommendations, continuous improvement and for sharing best practice within the SIG.

2.2 The HPC SIG Executive Group will be responsible for:

- Organising HPC SIG meetings of which there should be a minimum of three per year and setting the agenda for such meetings.
- Ensuring that the finances of the SIG are managed appropriately and their status is communicated to members on a quarterly basis.
- Working to create greater diversity and inclusion throughout the SIG.
- Maintaining the SIG website and ensuring that its content is appropriate.
- Compliance with GDPR and other regulatory requirements.
- Ensuring that membership lists are up to date and that information held is current and correct.
- Facilitating cross-cutting themes and engagement with other special interest groups with the ever-widening remit of HPC services.
- Promotion and Marketing of HPC-SIG activities and impact with the aim of producing a series of case studies/annual report.
- Engaging with industry experts to widen the understanding of future roadmaps and trends.

2.3 The quorum of the SIG Executive shall be not less than three members one of whom must be the Chair or the Vice-Chair.

2.4 Members of the SIG Executive Group MUST be a paid employee of a Full Member Institution. Anyone who isn't, or who ceases to be a permanent employee of a Full Member Institution will not be eligible for the post. Existing members of the SIG Executive Group who cease to be eligible for their post will stand down immediately and the secretary (or Vice Chair in the event of the secretary becoming ineligible) will commence the arrangements for a SIG Executive Group Election as detailed in 3 below but just for the now vacant post.

3 SIG Executive Group Elections

3.1 Members of the SIG Executive Group:

- Will be elected to post by the votes of the Primary contacts from Full Member institutions only
 - Will be elected to serve a two year term of office
- 3.2 The secretary will ensure that the SIG maintains an accurate list of members at all times and will, three months prior to the SIG meeting in which an election is due to take place, contact the SIGs Full Members by email and other means that an election is due to take place. This communication will:
- Inform members of the date of the election.
 - Detail the posts to be elected and the responsibilities of those posts.
 - Detail the process for supplying nominations and request that nominations are submitted to the secretary by a specified date. This specified date will be no later than one month prior to the date of the election except where a lack of nominees for a post requires an extension to the nomination deadline.
- 3.3 The process for nominations will be as follows:
- Only people from Full member organisations may be nominated to stand for election.
 - Only primary contacts from Full member organisations are able to nominate; it is expected that primary contacts would consult with other SIG members from their home institution regarding nominations although this is not required.
 - Nominees will also require a seconder. The seconder must be a primary contact from a full member organisation.
 - Primary contacts may not nominate other members from their home institution.
 - Primary contacts may not nominate themselves.
 - It is required that nominators will seek the consent of nominees.
 - Nominees for Chair should receive at least two nominations in order to be eligible to stand for election. Only one Secunder is required for a Nominee for Chair.
- 3.4 Once the deadline for nominations has been reached the secretary will confirm that the nominees are eligible and still willing to stand. Each nominee will be asked to submit a brief biography and platform statement for dissemination to the membership. This will have a clear word count and deadline for submission attached.
- 3.5 All members will be informed by email that the election is taking place and what the election process looks like. Members will also be sent the biographies and platform statements of the nominees and informed as to who the primary contact is for their institution and their role in the voting process.
- 3.6 Voting will take place at a HPC-SIG meeting on the date identified by the Secretary and previously communicated to the membership.

The Chair of the Executive will introduce each nominee for a post in turn and identify who has seconded that nominee.

Biographies and platform statements will be available on the HPC-SIG website and will have been distributed to all members by the secretary prior to the HPC-SIG meeting. Each nominee for a particular post on the Executive will be given 5 minutes to make a short presentation supporting their case for election. The membership will then be offered the opportunity to ask any questions they might have.

Once all nominee's for a particular post have made their presentations and have been questioned by the membership, primary contacts will be asked to vote using a show of hands. Voting will be by nominee's family name in A-Z order.

All primary contacts will be asked to stand and identify the institution on behalf of whom they are casting their votes.

Only Primary contacts will be allowed to vote for a nominee. Where the Primary contact for a particular Full Member organisation is not able to attend the SIG event a secondary contact from that organisation may be delegated the responsibility for voting on behalf of that organisation. The Primary contact needs to inform the chair, or vice-chair, of the name of the person who has been delegated responsibility for voting.

Primary contacts from full member organisations may only vote for one nominee.

Where the Primary contact is standing for a post, their site's vote will be counted as being in favour of the Primary contact.

Votes cast will be counted by the SIG Executive and confirmed with members. Once the vote is confirmed those Primary contacts from full member organisations who have cast their votes will sit down and will thus be ineligible to vote for further nominees for this post.

In the event of a tie those nominees who received less votes than the tied nominees will drop out and another vote will take place. ALL Primary contacts from full member organisations will be asked to re-stand and will be eligible to vote in this voting round.

In the event of a second tie, where the number of nominees has been reduced to two, the deciding vote will be cast by the outgoing Chair for all posts except that of chair. Should a vote for Chair end in a tie the Vice Chair will cast the deciding vote.

The person selected to the post will be the nominee who secures the most votes from the voting members.

- 3.7 All members will be informed by email of the results of the elections no later than 5 working days after the SIG meeting.
- 3.8 Existing SIG Executive members will remain in post until the end of the calendar month following the SIG meeting where the results are announced. This will be known as the Interim Period. The newly elected Executive are expected to attend all SIG Executive meetings during that period and the period will primarily be used to ensure documents and data and their associated responsibilities are transferred in an organised fashion.
- 3.9 The new SIG Exec take up their new posts and responsibilities upon the expiry of the Interim Period.
- 3.10 Once new SIG Executive members are in post they will be provided access to the HPC-SIG shared storage area(s). Outgoing members will have their access rights revoked at the same time. Provision will be made to transfer this data between institutions should the change of membership so dictate.
- 3.11 Should a change in Executive membership also require a change in the location of the shared storage area the new SIG Executive will conduct an immediate review of the groups GDPR Privacy Notice and issue a new one if changes are required.

4 Measuring Success

- 4.1 The success of the HPC-SIG Group Executive and hence the SIG itself will be measured against the list of 'responsibilities' detailed above.
- 4.2 We will annually measure how we...

Demonstrate the value that HPC brings to higher educational research and industrial collaborations in the UK by:

- The number of case studies published on the HPC-SIG website.
- The number of 'hits' per case study.

Disseminate knowledge, experience and advice on good practice for HPC technologies and service operations to members and external stakeholders by:

- The number of articles published on the HPC-SIG website.
- The average number of 'hits' per article.
- The number of presentations made at HPC-SIG meetings that can be categorised as 'knowledge transfer'.

Develop the professional reputation of the HPC-SIG by:

- The number of invitations made to members of the SIG Executive to attend external stakeholder events to provide advice and expertise.

Are creating a vibrant, inclusive and welcoming community by

- The number of SIG members.
- The number of member institutions in each category (Full & Affiliate).
- Diversity in the membership of the SIG.

Addressing the HPC skills gap within UK Higher Education by:

- The number of skills development activities and training opportunities arranged by the SIG itself.
- The number of skills development activities and training opportunities promoted through the SIG web, email and social media channels.

Developing recognised professional career paths for HPC in UK HEIs

- The number of documented career paths published.
- The number of 'hits' on career paths published on the SIG website.

Providing a forum for discussion of new technology or regulatory change by:

- The number of presentations made at HPC-SIG meetings along with the number of threads that can be categorised as 'New Technology' on the HPC-SIG Jiscmail or social media accounts.
- The number of presentations made at HPC-SIG meetings along with the number of threads that can be categorised as 'Regulatory Change' on the HPC-SIG Jiscmail or social media accounts.

5 Appointment of Non-Executive Members and Working Groups

- 5.1 The HPC SIG Executive Group may appoint members into non-executive roles to work with the Executive Group to support the delivery of short-term projects, such as developing action plans, website development, or to lead or participate in working groups to investigate matters of interest to the group.

6 Mode of Operation

- 6.1 The HPC SIG will meet at least three times per year. Dates for these meetings will usually be agreed within a week of the end of the last SIG meeting. They may also be agreed further in advance when possible.
- 6.2 These terms of reference will be reviewed annually by the HPC-SIG Executive and any proposed changes brought to the first HPC-SIG meeting of the year.
- 6.3 Minutes from SIG Executive meetings and notes of proceedings from SIG Events will be made available on the HPC-SIG website.
- 6.4 Membership fees will be reviewed annually at the last HPC-SIG meeting of the year.
- 6.5 The HPC-SIG Exec are assumed to have delegated responsibility to act reasonably on behalf of the HPC SIG and to further its goals.

7 Composition

- 7.1 The HPC-SIG welcomes full members from:
 - UK Higher Educational Institutions (all meetings).
- 7.2 Affiliate members are welcomed from:
 - International HEIs
 - Other public sector organisations
 - Complementary interest groups interested in the potential of HPC in developing research options
- 7.3 The type of membership conveys a range of benefits all of which are predicated on payment of the appropriate annual membership fee.
- 7.4 Full members will receive 1 vote per institution at HPC SIG Executive elections and will be eligible to attend all SIG events.
- 7.5 Affiliate members will be eligible to attend all SIG events but will not be eligible to vote at HPC SIG Executive elections.

8 Financial Management

- 8.1 The Treasurer will be responsible for managing the financial affairs of the HPC-SIG and create the required financial instruments at his or her local institution to enable receipt of income and disbursement of funds in a timely and efficient manner.
- 8.2 At the first HPC-SIG meeting of the year the Treasurer will provide a report on the HPC-SIG finances. This will include a full breakdown of income and expenditure to date and will also detail expected income and expenditure for the coming 12 months.
- 8.3 The Treasurer will also provide update and projection reports on the finances of the HPC-SIG at quarterly HPC-SIG Executive meetings.
- 8.4 Expenditure by the HPC-SIG in support of activities must be approved in writing by the HPC-SIG executive ahead of those expenses being incurred. Failure to get such written approval risks those activities not being supported by the SIG and the costs of the activities being borne by the institution that accrued them.
- 8.5 Requests for HPC-SIG financial support for activities must be submitted to the Treasurer.

9 Data Protection & Privacy

- 9.1 The HPC-SIG will be registered as a data controller with the Information Commissioner's Office.
- 9.2 The Secretary will be responsible for ensuring that the HPC-SIG Privacy Notice is issued to all new members.
- 9.3 The Secretary will be responsible for ensuring that the HPC-SIG Privacy Notice is available for viewing on the website.
- 9.4 The HPC-SIG will maintain a retention schedule detailing how long personal data will be retained. This will be issued to new members with the Privacy Notice and will also be available for viewing on the website.